

To the Honourable the COMMONS of Great Britain,
in PARLIAMENT Assembled. 515. l. 15

The CASE of THOMAS BAMBRIDGE.

THAT by Letters Patent, dated the Thirtieth of September, 1728, the said Thomas Bambridge was appointed Keeper of his Majesty's Old and New Pallaces of Westminster, as also Warden of his Majesty's Prison of the Fleet for Life, with Remainder to Dougall Cuthbert, Esq. for Life.

THAT the Twenty-eighth day of February, 1728, the said Thomas Bambridge was taken into Custody, and soon after Confined under Irons in the Prison of Newgate; and whilst he was under this Confinement, an Act of Parliament was made, in the Second Year of his Majesty's Reign, whereby Reciting, "That his Majesty had been pleased to order his Attorney General to prosecute at Law, the said Thomas Bambridge, for wilfully permitting several Debtors, as well to his Majesty, as to divers of his Subjects, to escape; and for being guilty of the most notorious Breaches of his Trust, and the highest Crimes and Misdemeanors in the Execution of the said Office; and having arbitrarily and unlawfully loaded with Irons, put into Dungeons, and destroyed Prisoners put under his Charge. It was Enacted, "That from and after the Fourteenth day of June, 1729, the said Thomas Bambridge, should be for ever disabled, and rendered incapable to have, hold, exercise and enjoy, the said Offices of Warden, or Keeper of the Fleet; or to have, hold, or exercise, any Authority relating thereunto: And that during the natural Life of the said Thomas Bambridge, it should be lawful for his Majesty, his Heirs and Successors, by his or their Letters Patent, under the Great Seal of Great Britain, from time to time, to Nominate, Constitute, and Appoint, such Person and Persons as his Majesty, his Heirs, or Successors, should judge fit and proper to be Warden, or Keeper of the Fleet, to hold the same, for and during the Will and Pleasure of his Majesty, his Heirs and Successors; and that from and after the said Fourteenth Day of June, The said Thomas Bambridge, should be disabled and rendered incapable, to hold, and enjoy any Office or Employment, either Civil or Military, or to use or exercise the Office or Employment of an Attorney, Solicitor, or Agent, for, or on the Behalf of any Person or Persons whatsoever, in any of his Majesty's Courts of Law or Equity."

THAT this Act passed, while the said Thomas Bambridge lay confined in Irons in Newgate, and after the passing thereof, the said Thomas Bambridge, in pursuance of his Majesty's said Order, was for such supposed Crimes and Misdemeanors, prosecuted by his Majesty's then Attorney General, and several Indictments were found against him, and the same were brought to Tryal; upon which several Indictments Nevertheless, the said Thomas Bambridge was found Not-Guilty, and acquitted of the Crimes and Misdemeanors laid to his Charge, without so much as producing any Witness on his Behalf.

THAT the said Thomas Bambridge continued in close Imprisonment, until the Twenty-fifth Day of October, 1729, when he was admitted to Bail, but was not absolutely discharged, until the Twenty-fifth Day of January following: That the said Thomas Bambridge, took his Tryal upon an Appeal for Murder of one of the Prisoners in the Fleet; and was also acquitted thereof, and no Prosecution was had against the said Thomas Bambridge for the Escape of any Debtor, either to his Majesty, or to any of his Subjects; nor was there any such Escape during the time he had the Custody of the Fleet Prison.

THAT by reason of such close Confinement, and the Prosecutions against the said Thomas Bambridge, he hath been put to great Charges and Expences; and notwithstanding his Acquittal, he has not only, for near six Years last past, lost the Profits of the several Offices, which were granted to him as aforesaid, but hath also, ever since the said Fourteenth day of June, been incapacitated from exercising his Profession of an Attorney and Solicitor for his Support and Subsistence.

THAT Instances of depriving a Free-born Subject of his Liberty, and Ousting him of his Freehold, and inflicting Penalties and Disabilities before Conviction, have been very rare; and the Legislature doth not usually exert itself to inflict Punishments in that Way, unless where the Crimes have been notoriously Evident, and not to be controverted; or where the ordinary Course of Justice did fail, or was likely to be eluded.

THAT the Facts and Suggestions on which this Act was granted, have been directly falsified by the Verdicts of Acquittal upon the several Trials, had, in the most solemn Manner: And his Majesty, who is the Fountain of Justice, and Protector of the Innocent, cannot (whilst this Act remains unrepealed) exercise his Prerogative, in restoring the Party Acquitted to his Rights and Properties; and, if this Act should be suffered to continue in force and unrepealed, it may be a Precedent of very dangerous Consequence, and no Innocent Person can be safe, or defend his Liberty or Property, in case the Malice of his Enemies, or common Fame, should raise Suggestions against him.

THAT the Sufferings of the said Thomas Bambridge, under this severe Law, have been very great, and continued a long Time; and unless timely relieved, he will be subject to the Penalties and Disabilities thereby inflicted, and deprived of all Means of a Livelyhood during his Life, notwithstanding his Innocence is Clear'd.

Therefore, the said Thomas Bambridge humbly hopes, that the said Act (or so much thereof as relates to him, will be Repealed) and that his Majesty may be Enabled to make him Compensation for the Injuries he has sustained, as also a Recompence for the Loss of his said Offices; or that he may be otherwise Relieved, in such manner as this Honourable House shall think fit.

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